

# The Many Loves Of Mata Hari

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***Story Line:***

The night before her execution, Mata Hari recounts her many loves to a poor orphaned peasant girl who has been delegated by the nuns to help her prepare for the dawn.

She bequeaths her worldly possessions to the poor girl, which encourages her to set out into the world and live her life the way she would like to live it. The young woman is smuggled out of the orphanage in her trunk the morning of Mata Hari's execution.

***Characters:***

Mata Hari, Condemned to death and awaiting execution

Mata Hari's Lawyer, George

Mata Hari's Chef, Philip

A poor orphaned peasant girl, Marie-Eve

Several French Guards

Several French Nuns

A French Colonel

A French Priest

## ARRIVAL PRISON CELL INT NIGHT

The door opens and an old nun with an old fashion habit shuffles in, and places a three legged stool in the middle of the bare room.

She leaves for a moment and returns with a crucifix, which she places on the table and a bed roll which she unrolls on the steel cot next to the stool.

The nun begins to leave and as she gets to the door Mata Hari enters followed by an old guard with his rifle drawn. Mata Hari is wearing a plain gray dress. The old guard sports an eye patch.

Mata Hari stops and the guard pushes her forward with his rifle.

### OLD GUARD

Here you are Prisoner. You are to be held in this cell until dawn tomorrow.

The nun stops and hastily does the sign of the cross twice then shuffles out of the cell.

After the nun leaves a young guard appears. The young guard is carrying some old gray threadbare blankets, which he tries to hand to Mata Hari.

She does not take the blankets but motions for him to place them on the bed. He looks at her for a moment before shuffling over to the bed and dropping the blankets unceremoniously on it.

Then he shuffles back to the door and begins to swing it shut. Just before he closes the door Mata Hari speaks forcing him to stop what he is doing. It is obvious he does not want to talk to her.

MATA HARI

Why did she do that?

OLD GUARD

She thinks you are evil ... Prisoner.

MATA HARI

Please, tell her not to do that!

OLD GUARD

I will tell her nothing. You can try ... but I doubt she will listen to you.

MATA HARI

I can understand why you may hate me. All the French Army seems to hate me, but why her.

OLD GUARD

She's old fashion and like her clothes ... she has certain bad habits.

MATA HARI

She is a sister of God! Shame on you making fun of her ...

OLD GUARD

Why should you care?

MATA HARI

I care ... I pray all the time.

OLD GUARD

Are you prayers ever answered?

MATA HARI

Sometimes.

OLD GUARD

Well ...Prisoner ... I doubt they will be this time.

MATA HARI

I have not given up hope.

He salutes her mockingly.

OLD GUARD

At dawn ... say hello to the devil for me.

The Guard exits the room bolting the door behind him.

Mata Hari is alone and looks around the room.

MATA HARI

How far have I fallen ...

She sits at the stool. It wobbles. She stand up and walks over to the cot, unrolls the mattress, sets the blankets and lays down.

She tries to make herself comfortable but cannot. She tosses back and forth until she turns to face the wall and begins to cry.

## MATA HARI

Is there not any hope for me?

Outside there is the sound of the changing of the guard. She gets up and walks over to the barred window. It is too high for her to see and so she takes the three legged stool and standing on her toes looks out.

## MATA HARI

It must be mid-night ...

The door unbolts and the younger guard re-enters. Behind him is the old nun who is carrying a plate with some food and a cup of tea. You can see the steam rising from the tea. She places them on the floor next to the door.

## MATA HARI

Thank you for your kindness sister.

The nun ignores Mata Hari.

## MATA HARI

Sister ... am I to suffer here alone?

The nun sneers at her, she crosses herself once and leaves the room. The door is swung close and is bolted. Mata Hari races to the door and pleads through the bars.

## MATA HARI

Sister ...sister for the love of God, please come and sit with me?

Mata Hari lingers at the door in despair for a moment before going over to the food and tea. She picks at the food but leaves it on the plate.

She takes up the tea and walks over to the cot and sits. She holds the tea cup in her hands for a few seconds to warm herself. She takes a sip from the tea and then places the cup next to her face and shrugs her shoulders.

## MATA HARI

I am doomed.

## **LAWYER'S FIRST VISIT INT NIGHT**

The door is unbolted and the old guard opens it and steps in. This time his rifle is slung over his shoulder.

OLD GUARD

You have a visitor Prisoner ....

Mata Hari sits up on the bed, then slowly stands and places her hands on her hips.

MATA HARI

At this hour ... you should knock ... I am a lady and I deserve some privacy.

OLD GUARD

A woman perhaps ... but not a lady.

MATA HARI

What would you know of the difference?

OLD GUARD

A wholesome life has taught me the difference.

Mata Hari takes a step forward and grabs her dress and slowly draws it to the top of her leather boots. The lace of her slip is just barely visible. The guard takes special interest.

OLD GUARD

Next time I shall knock ... but do not ask me for anything more.

The guard steps out of the entrance and her lawyer enters.

The lawyer solemnly removes his hat and bows with his hand over his heart. He leans his walking stick against the door frame.

LAWYER

Bonsoir Madame.

MATA HARI

You mean bonjour George ... it is past midnight ...Any news?

LAWYER

Yes ....

She gets excited, clasps her hands together as in prayer, stands and approaches him.

MATA HARI

A reprieve!

He waves with his hand and shakes his head.

LAWYER

... bad news I am afraid.

He steps forward and places his arms around her. The lawyer hugs her ... she is lifeless while he does this.

They separate and she straightens her dress. She turns her back to him.

LAWYER

It is so late .... There is not much more I can do ...

MATA HARI

Maybe in the morning?

LAWYER

... They are to execute the sentence at dawn...

MATA HARI

Execute the sentence! You mean shoot me George. They will shoot me at Dawn! That doesn't leave us much time does it?

LAWYER

I will not give up trying to save you. When I leave I will look for a telephone. I will work through the night

MATA HARI

The minutes pass by quickly George ... What time is it.

The lawyer hunts for a pocket watch in the pocket of the vest. It is a fancy gold watch on a long gold chain. He takes it out of his pocket.

LAWYER

It is twenty minutes past the hour.

The lawyer puts the watch to his ear to hear if it is running.

MATA HARI

Which hour?

LAWYER

Minuit ... midnight my dear.

MATA HARI

Just as I thought ... past midnight. My life is counting down quickly.

LAWYER

You should try to get some rest ...

MATA HARI

Do you really think I will be able to sleep tonight?

The lawyer fixates on his watch as he stops to wind it.

LAWYER

Perhaps I should only visit for a short time ...

MATA HARI

I have always admired your watch. It is very beautiful.

LAWYER

It is isn't it! My father gave this pocket watch to me as a gift the day I was called to the Bar at the Sorbonne. It was made in Geneva in 1870 and once belonged to my grandfather.

MATA HARI

I have noticed that you like to look at it as you think.

LAWYER

You are very observant Margaretha. This is one of the traits I most admire about you. When I look at my watch I think back to the advice that my father gave me. My father was a supreme court judge you know.

MATA HARI

In the past few weeks I have seen you do a great deal of thinking.

LAWYER

Yes I have had to think a great deal. Margaretha you seem to understand the human condition better than most women.

MATA HARI

Perhaps it is all that I have been through in my life. God only knows that woman lack the understanding of some things like men do.

LAWYER

Things like law?

MATA HARI

Things like war and killing ... women are made for love not war. We are soft like Venus not hard like Mars.

LAWYER

Do you know why I was asked to take your case?

MATA HARI

Was it because we were friends and you believe in my innocence?

LAWYER

As a friend I felt a certain responsibility to you but ... but you know Mata Hari ... no other lawyer in France wanted to argue your defence.

The Lawyer takes another look at his pocket watch. She is silent. She fights back tears. He looks up and hands her his handkerchief which she waves away.

MATA HARI

I will smudge it ... with my tears.

He hands it to her a second time, insistently. She accepts it. She smells the perfume in the handkerchief and starts to wave it around the room.

MATA HARI

You have always been a perfect gentleman towards me.

He smiles and bows.

LAWYER

Oui Madame. And why not be kind to a lady. Perhaps I should only visit for a short time ... it is getting quite late.

MATA HARI

George ... it is getting quite early. You are still thinking of yesterday ... with what awaits me ... I can only think of today.

LAWYER

I need to go ...

The lawyer walks to the door and is about to knock on the door when he is stopped by Mata Hari who walks besides him and stops his hand in flight just as it is about to strike the door.

MATA HARI

What about Ladoux of counter-espionage? Call you call and talk with him?

LAWYER

Margaretha ... I have been to his office at French Military Intelligence several times and have been left waiting for hours.

The Colonel is apparently away on assignment and his staff refuses to talk with me about you even over the telephone.

MATA HARI

Maybe if I telephone him them? Maybe they will tell me where he is. Maybe his second in command will talk with me?

LAWYER

No Margaretha ... that won't be allowed. Besides he has his own problems. Ladoux maintains that he never recruited you to spy for France.

She turns away abruptly and curses.

MATA HARI

Le saloupe! (The Bastard!)

LAWYER

But now it seems a second agent has stepped forward to say Ladoux was running her the same way he ran you. She says that he made her similar promises but now is reneging with her the same way he has with you.

MATA HARI

Really ... a second of Ladoux's "non-existent" agente secrete.

LAWYER

Yes ... a French woman living in Spain. She claims to be the mistress of the German Naval attaché in Madrid of all people.

MATA HARI

How thrilling!

LAWYER

She has shamed the Naval attaché publicly and now he has been recalled to Berlin. It is quite a scandal even between belligerents ... even in a time of war. Using sex to gain access to secrets. What has this war come to?

Mata Hari nervously primes herself and adjusts her hair as she states the following:

MATA HARI

Yes ... what has this war come to?

The lawyer pauses to carefully observe Mata Hari for a moment. She too stops what she is doing and coyly looks back at him.

LAWYER

Rumour has it that Ladoux is to be arrested next!

MATA HARI

Given the way Ladoux has treated me ... he should be the one shot at dawn ... not me.

LAWYER

Were it so simple. I wish we had more time ... a few days ... even a few hours.

MATA HARI

I would settle for any extra time you can find me George. I do not want to die at dawn.

LAWYER

With the latest revelations, I have petitioned the judges arguing that the Boche are obviously trying to get back at Ladoux and at

French Military Intelligence by making it appear that you were spying for Berlin. A quid pro quo ...

MATA HARI

What does a British quid have to do with any of this? I have always been paid in French Francs.

The lawyers starts to chuckle uncontrollably. Mata Hari stares at him as if he was crazy.

MATA HARI

What's wrong with you? This is not a laughing matter. Have you been drinking again?

The lawyer stops laughing as quickly as he started.

LAWYER

Not quid as in British pound my dear. Its latin ... QUID-PRO-QUO means to a trade for something.

MATA HARI

I still don't understand.

LAWYER

I think the Boche are trying to discredit Ladoux as a counter to what French Military Intelligence has done to German Military Intelligence in Spain.

MATA HARI

Intelligence ... intelligence ... I have never found the military to be all that intelligent.

LAWYER

Military Intelligence is a contradiction in terms.

MATA HARI

They look so silly all dressed up in their colourful feathers like fancy fighting cocks. Take away their uniforms and they all look the same ... little boys playing with big guns to make up for the fact they are little boys.

LAWYER

It may be that the two counter-espionage services are fencing with each other.

Mata Hari picks up the Lawyer's walking stick and proceeds to use it as a play sword.

MATA HARI

You boys and their games! Leave us girls out of them. If this is what is happening they are missing each other with their swords and poking me instead.

The Lawyer's motions for her walking stick back. She caresses it seductively for a moment and slowly shakes her head. He lets her keep it for the moment.

LAWYER

You might be right. You might be caught in the middle Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

I am not St. Sebastian you know. They can't just practice the Art of War by tying me to a stake and filling me full of holes.

She mocks shooting at him with the cane and then hands it back to him,

LAWYER

In their eyes, you are not a Saint by any measure Margaretha. You should never have played this game even if for French Military Intelligence. These are very dangerous times. It is hard to know who are our friends and who are not any more.

MATA HARI

George ... if I had known then what I know now ...

LAWYER

If you had come and talked with me about working for Ladoux I would have talked you out of it.

MATA HARI

George ... I needed the money.

LAWYER

If you needed money I could have lent some to you. At least a few thousand Francs from time to time to tied you over. What are friends for? My dear you were never frugal with money.

MATA HARI

George you have never been poor. I have been poor. I can't live that life again. I would rather die than live in poverty again.

LAWYER

This war will not last forever. You should have been patient and have realized that one day things will return to the way they were before 1914.

MATA HARI

I think I will not be around to enjoy the "Good Times" if they ever return.

LAWYER

Please don't say that. Don't give up hope.

MATA HARI

There is not much reason to be hopeful. You have petitioned them. What have the judges to say to this?

LAWYER

They have not even acknowledged receiving my latest letter. The clerk said it may take several days before the judges even receive the letters.

MATA HARI

How can they do this to me? I don't have several days. I don't even have several hours.

LAWYER

They know that. The judges have closed their eyes and want to see no more, they have covered their ears and want to hear no more. They have all left Paris and two are now back at the front.

MATA HARI

The hell with them. What about President Poincare? He is still in charges isn't he?

LAWYER

I don't know how much power he really yields any more. The generals are very much in charge of things.

MATA HARI

Can you not ask President Poincare to stop this? Can you not convince him of my innocence?

LAWYER

I have tried with him too. No one at his office wants to confer with me about your case.

MATA HARI

Noooo ... Will the President not talk to you about me?

The lawyer's face becomes stern and he solemnly shakes his head

MATA HARI

Poincare once gave me a bouquet of red roses after he saw my fan dance in 1908. He was most insistently, as all the old men are.

LAWYER

They won't let me in to see him and so I approached him last Thursday on the steps of the Grande Opera after the concert.

MATA HARI

What did he say?

LAWYER

He let me confer with him for a moment in his car. I don't think it helped your case. The President was very angry I confronted him in public. He does not want to be seen with anyone associated with you.

MATA HARI

What else can you do at such a late hour? Especially if you are being turned away at his office.

LAWYER

Poincare says he doesn't remember ever meeting you ...

MATA HARI

He would say that ... the old goat.

LAWYER

He doesn't seem to remember ever seeing you dance.

MATA HARI

I remember the evening quite well. Poincare was so enchanted he dropped and broke his pince-nez.

LAWYER

Yes ... come to think of it I remember that.

MATA HARI

George ... were you there?

LAWYER

You forget Margaretha. That was the day we met. I waited for you at the stage door.

MATA HARI

You have a good memory George, better than mine. It seems a lifetime ago. I must have put in some performance that evening.

LAWYER

I remember waiting for over an hour in the rain after everyone else had gone. It is easy to remember meeting a beautiful

woman for the first time. You haven't lost your charm given all that has happened since then.

MATA HARI

George ... you flatter me.

LAWYER

I have tried everything I can think of. What else can I do but flatter?

MATA HARI

Tell them that Poincare insisted in seeing me afterwards in the privacy of my boudoir and delivered a dozen red roses to me in person.

LAWYER

Margaretha ... that doesn't help much. It is common knowledge that he love roses and gives them as gifts to all his ladies.

MATA HARI

Well George ... I sat on his lap.

LAWYER

You did what Margaretha!

MATA HARI

I sat on his lap and teased him abit.

He popped a few buttons. I still have them in my jewellery case. Maybe I should ask you to return them to him. That should refresh his memory? Where is my jewellery case when I need it?

LAWYER

Perhaps we should send them to his wife? Margaretha ... you've never sat on my lap.

Mata Hari guides the Lawyer to the bed and gets him to sit. With great flourish she lifts her dress, bares her bottom and settles in on his lap.

MATA HARI

Better late than never. Is that better George?

LAWYER

Much ...

MATA HARI

You know the buttons were not off his vest.

LAWYER

His jacket perhaps?

Mata Hari shakes her head.

LAWYER

Oh ... No wonder his private secretary has told me to stop trying to involve le President de la Republique en question de Madame Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

Well big surprise. The old goat is obviously senile. Big wonder the allies are losing the war.

LAWYER

You should stop saying that! The guards may be listening at the door.

MATA HARI

Sure they are listening! What are they going to do? Shoot me!

Mata Hari starts to tussle his hair and unbutton his vest.

LAWYER

Stop that Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Please George.

LAWYER

I am only allowed to visit you. Nothing else. You can always torment the guard.

Mata Hari slaps him and bolts to her feet. George is left sitting on the cot speechless. The door swings open and the old guard appears with rifle at the ready.

OLD GUARD

What's going on here?

LAWYER

Nothing ... we are just conferring.

He loads a round in the breech and lifts his rifle.

OLD GUARD

What happened?

The lawyer stands and does up the buttons on his vest.

LAWYER

Careful ... old soldier. It might go off.

OLD GUARD

Tonight I am responsible for her. Tell me what happened?

LAWYER

I tried to take certain liberties with Madame ...

OLD GUARD

Monsieur I will allow none of that. Apologize to the lady.

The old guard motions at the lawyer with his rifle. The lawyer draws his hand through his hair and bows to Mata Hari.

LAWYER

I apologize to Madame.

OLD GUARD

Monsieur ... anymore of that and I will lock you up in the cell across the hall.

LAWYER

There will be no need for that I will be leave shortly.

The old guard shouldered his rifle, turns to Mata Hari and salutes.

OLD GUARD

If there is anything that Madame needs I am just outside the door.

MATA HARI

You are a gentleman after all.

OLD GUARD

Madame, I have a wife and three daughters.

MATA HARI

So you have a heart.

OLD GUARD

As much of a heart that a soldier can have after three years of  
bloody war.

The old guard turns and leaves the cell, closing but not bolting the door  
behind him.

MATA HARI

Did you hear that! He called me Madame.

LAWYER

You have always had a way with men. You may end up having your way after all.

MATA HARI

George ... let me feel sorry for myself. No one seems to be worrying about me.

LAWYER

I am worried for you.

MATA HARI

You are my lawyer ... you should be worried for me.

LAWYER

Am I just your lawyer? Am I also not your friend?

MATA HARI

You should stop saying that!

LAWYER

Why?

MATA HARI

At dawn George you may end up standing besides me. There are plenty of bullets to go around.

LAWYER

They can't just shoot you for nothing. Even in war.

MATA HARI

Sure they can. Look at me ... I am innocent and look at what they are going to do to me. They can do anything in war. You of all people should know that!

LAWYER

War has not always been like that. This war ... this Great Patriotic War ... this calamity is so different from 1870. This will be France's undoing.

MATA HARI

France ... what about Europe. Europe is more than just France and Germany. There are many other smaller countries. Look at what has happened to them. Look what has happened to my

homeland Holland. Both sides are slaughtering innocent people ... the French ... the Germans ... everyone. Men ... women ... children. And they think I have something to do with the slaughter!

LAWYER

Let us not talk about this. Matters are as upsetting as they can be presently. Let us not make matters worst between us.

MATA HARI

I have never harmed anyone in my life. It is me who has been harmed. When I mentioned this to the judges at my court martial they ignored me.

LAWYER

Margaretha they were all generals at your court martial. Their job is to make war. You were calling the kettle black.

MATA HARI

They weren't blackened kettles ... they were Cracked Pots.

LAWYER

The generals at your court martial had their orders.

MATA HARI

And who gave the people ... who gave the generals ... their orders?

The lawyer takes out a cigarette case and offers one to Mata Hari, who declines. He lights a cigarette and blows a ring into the air. Studying it as it floats away.

LAWYER

Their orders probably came down from the very top!

MATA HARI

From the old goat who can't even remember ever meeting me!  
The blind leading the deaf and the dumb! How convenient it is to use me as a scapegoat for their stupidity.

LAWYER

Push after push after unsuccessful push. The poor boys mowed down in the thousands. The allies are doing badly now that the Russians have left the war.

MATA HARI

It is so easy for the Generals to blame the bad news on traitors and spies.

But surely the Americans should be able to help the French ...

LAWYER

They have only just arrived. The Yanks don't really know how to fight in a modern war. Their experiences during their Civil War fifty years ago hasn't prepared them for the Western Front. Besides it may be too little ... too late for the French.

MATA HARI

So what else is new? The French army have never really been disciplined. Not like the Bosche.

LAWYER

Mata Hari ... is there something you know that I should?

MATA HARI

I heard the guards talking about this.

LAWYER

Oh .... I see. Yes ... it takes time to learn how to fight.

MATA HARI

I thought it wasn't that hard to do. All you need are a handful of soldiers. Give them some rifles and a few bullets, and watch what happens.

LAWYER

It isn't that simple Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Sure it is ... just come and watch at dawn tomorrow. Twelve soldiers, eleven bullets... one target ... Me. Bet they won't miss. War at its finest! First the women, then the children and if there are any bullets left over shoot the soldiers then.

LAWYER

I don't think I will be able to stand and watch them shoot you.

MATA HARI

And why not? If you are not there I shall be all by myself ...

LAWYER

I can't ...

MATA HARI

George I do not want to die alone.

LAWYER

It will break my heart to watch.

MATA HARI

It will shatter mine ... they will pin a target over my heart and their eleven sharp unforgiving bullets will tear into it making many little pieces. And with my shattered heart ... will die all my loves.

LAWYER

I will be there at dawn but only because I am your friend and not because I am your lawyer. I may be the only one there for you.

MATA HARI

Doesn't anyone else care at all? And what about the Ministers I mentioned?

LAWYER

They have all left Paris and gone into the hiding with their wives ... every last one of them!

MATA HARI

There was a time when these very men would sit at my feet. They showered me with wealth beyond imagining. Now they avoid me like the plague. Look at how far I have fallen!

Mata Hari turns her back at the lawyer and cries into her hands.

LAWYER

Madame you should never have returned to France from Spain.

MATA HARI

I had to ... where else could I go?

LAWYER

Back home to Holland for the duration perhaps.

MATA HARI

And do what? I am not allowed to dance in Holland. They think it is immoral.

LAWYER

If you had gone back home you could have lived a long and safer life ....

MATA HARI

And what now?

LAWYER

I would send for a priest and make your confessions.

MATA HARI

There will be time enough for that.

She stands tall and dignified.

MATA HARI

All that I have left is my dignity ... they cannot take that away  
from me ...

LAWYER

Yes Margaretha ...

Mata Hari stands and regally walks over to her lawyer and gives him a big  
hug and a kiss.

MATA HARI

Thank you for everything you have done for me. I know you  
have done your best, George.

LAWYER

I wish I had been able to do more ...

MATA HARI

Treason in France normally means Madame la Guillotine.

LAWYER

Oui ...

## MATA HARI

I am glad I will not make her acquaintance. It is quite gruesome

...

The Lawyer nods. Mata Hari accidentally steps back. She knocks over the chair, which rolls across the floor like a head at the guillotine. The lawyer picks the stool up.

## MATA HARI

I am told after you lose your head and while it rolls across the floor you are still conscious.

## LAWYER

At least with the Guillotine ... all you feel is a pinch on the back of the neck and then unconsciousness and then nothing.

## MATA HARI

Before they do shoot me I must get myself ready. Do they not give me the condemned a fitting last meal. Look at what they have brought me.

Her lawyer walks over and studies the tray of food next to the door.

LAWYER

Old stale bread and mouldy cheese. This will not do. What do you what?

MATA HARI

A hot bath, a proper last supper ... and my trunk of clothes ....

LAWYER

The kitchen is probably long closed.

MATA HARI

That is not my problem. Tell them the condemned would like potage and a salad, fowl and vegetables and fresh fruit and coffee, real coffee!

LAWYER

We are in the middle of a war ... and the middle of October. Where are they going to get lettuce and tomatoes for salads. And fresh fruit?

MATA HARI

I can tell you that they are serving this at Les Grande tables in Paris. Get them to deliver ....

LAWYER

Deliver?

MATA HARI

We are just ten minutes by car to the train station and only thirty minutes to the centre of Paris by train. Get someone to go and ask the chef at Hotel Athenes ... he will do this for an old friend.

LAWYER

I will talk with the Colonel. You may have to settle for hot soup or porridge.

MATA HARI

That will not do! Tell him what I want ... and a hot bath ...

LAWYER

I think he will agree to allow you to have a hot bath. That will not be too difficult to sort out.

MATA HARI

And my trunk and my clothes ...

LAWYER

They will want to check everything in your trunk before they give you your things.

MATA HARI

Tell them to be careful and not damage my things. They are expensive silks, dresses, shoes and the like.

LAWYER

And ... someone will have to stay with you will you prepare yourself.

MATA HARI

Why my dear friend?... I know how to bath and dress myself.

LAWYER

I think they are worried you will do yourself in? You know ... hang your self.

MATA HARI

And rob them of their satisfaction?

LAWYER

Rules are rules Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Since when do I follow the rules?

LAWYER

... And look where that has gotten you.

MATA HARI

It is the war that has gotten me here ... I have done nothing that  
I am ashamed of!

The Lawyer gives her a stern look and addresses her...

LAWYER

I know you continue to profess your innocence ... but when you accepted money from the German Imperial Government . as far as the French Government is concerned you became an enemy of La Republique.

MATA HARI

I needed the money ... no one in Paris was interested in seeing me dance.

LAWYER

Do you blame them ... during war time ... only les industrialistes make money and they don't spend money on exotic dancers ... you should have gone home to Holland when you had the chance ... and waited for the war to end.

MATA HARI

I guess it is too late to be wise. Maybe they will let me go if I say I will go home and leave them alone.

The lawyer shakes his head.

LAWYER

It is too late for that. You might have asked that at your trial.

She goes to the door and tries to open it. It rattles but remains bolted. She tries the same with the barred window. Then she walks over to study a mouse hole opposite the door. And looks in the mouse hole. Mata Hari walks over to the mouldy cheese. She scrapes away some of the mould then places the cheese in front of the mouse hole.

LAWYER

War affects us all... whether we think so or not. It affects your friends even Les Ministres.

MATA HARI

There is not much difference between being a minister and a mistress.

The lawyer frowns.

MATA HARI

Tell the Colonel what I want ... and that I have no intention of robbing history of my injustice.

LAWYER

Yes Madame ....

MATA HARI

And tell them I shall bravely stand before them ... Mata Hari ...  
The Eye of the Dawn.

LAWYER

Yes Margaretha ...

MATA HARI

I will give them something to watch at dawn! It will be history  
that will judge them ... not me. For I am innocent.

She sweeps her hand up over her forehead and strikes a pose.

MATA HARI

Dawn tomorrow will be my finest performance. In a short time  
no one will remember their names ... but they will remember  
mine!

LAWYER

I will try to get you your things ... your trunk .... a bath and a  
better meal.

MATA HARI

Go then ...

LAWYER

And if he refuses to see me.

Mata Hari walks over to the barred window and pauses for a moment then she turns to the Lawyer.

MATA HARI

Tell the Colonel ... if he grants me my last wishes ... I will behave myself tomorrow at dawn. I will give him no trouble ...

LAWYER

Oui Margaretha .....

The Lawyer bows and kisses her hand. She places her hand on his head and massages his hair. He stands and he grabs her ... he tries to kiss her but she turns her cheek. He kisses her passionately on the cheek.

MATA HARI

Remember the last time we spent an evening together.... Before all this?

LAWYER

My dear ... that I will never forget, that night it will be my last thoughts as I leave this terrible world. May I ask you something ...

MATA HARI

Anything ...

LAWYER

Why is it we have never shared a bed ...?

MATA HARI

I never shared a bed with anyone after I divorced ... because of something my husband gave me

LAWYER

I don't understand.

MATA HARI

My husband picked his affliction up at a brothel in the far east.  
On our wedding night he gave it to me and before I knew it I  
had given it to our children. It is what killed my son and  
daughter. My son went blind before he died.

LAWYER

Oh ... C'est terrible.

The Lawyer bows his head and makes the sign of the cross.

MATA HARI

What is it about this place?

LAWYER

Quoi?

MATA HARI

Every two minutes someone is making the sign of the cross.

LAWYER

Maybe we are all tired and worried. It is a nunnery after all.

MATA HARI

And what about me? Figure they to shoot me at a nunnery.  
What did Shakespeare once say ? ... Too late for me here. I am  
getting very tired!

The lawyer hugs her again and kisses her on the other cheek.

MATA HARI

My husband was a terrible man. He knew he had this affliction  
yet he wed me, bed me and then fathered my two children.

LAWYER

What happened to him?

MATA HARI

He died of his own affliction syphilis ... divorced, all alone and  
penniless. It was then that I decided to try to make a name for  
myself ... so I too did not die alone and destitute.

There is an awkward silence between the two of them.

MATA HARI

As plain old Margaretha, divorcee I was nothing. As Mata Hari  
... I was someone. I could make a name for myself.

LAWYER

Yes you really made a name for yourself. The Frenchmen love  
their Courtesans.

MATA HARI

But I was not a Courtesan.

LAWYER

You did have many Parisians who courted you.

MATA HARI

Yes ... I had many admirers who tried to bed me.

LAWYER

I was one of them!

MATA HARI

I had to rebuff you several times George.

LAWYER

There was no harm trying was there?

MATA HARI

You were very persuasive. Had you not ever wondered why I only danced ... or sat for photographs?

LAWYER

Now I know ... I enjoyed your dancing ... especially when we were alone and you danced just for me.

MATA HARI

Maybe there will time for one more dance?

LAWYER

Or one last photograph?

He shakes his head. The lawyer takes out and looks at his pocket watch.  
She yawns and stretches.

LAWYER

Time for me to go and make my telephone inquiries.

MATA HARI

I will be waiting for your return.

After the moment, the Lawyer walks over to the door, straightens himself out and knocks. The door is opened and the guard appears.

LAWYER

I wish to talk with the Colonel.

The guard looks up at Mata Hari and then at the Lawyer.

OLD GUARD

If you insist ... he will not be very happy being disturbed this early in the morning... can it not wait until when he comes to collect the condemned?

LAWYER

Non ... corporal ... I must see the Colonel immediately!

#### OLD GUARD

Bien ... suivez moi monsieur.

After the lawyer leaves the cell the old guard turns and addresses the condemned.

#### OLD GUARD

Madame ... you should try to get some sleep ...

Mata Hari walks over to the table and picks up the tea cup before walking back to the cot. She takes a few more sips from the tea and then sets the teacup down next to the cot and rubs her eyes. She gives another great big yawn and lays down.

#### MATA HARI

I will close my eyes for a few minutes ...

Mata Hari lays on the bed and turns her face towards the wall before falling asleep.

A few minutes later the door quietly opens and the old guard peers in. He quietly enters, walks over to the bed and looks down at Mata Hari asleep on the bed. The old guard pulls the blankets over Mata Hari.

He walks back to the door and turns the lights off before quietly closing the door behind himself as he leaves.

## NUN RETURNS INT NIGHT

The door opens and a young nun enters. She looks like a younger sister to the older nun.

She looks at the tray of old bread and what is left of mouldy cheese. She looks at Mata Hari who is still sleeping. The nun walks over to the bed and wakes Mata Hari.

YOUNG NUN

Madame does not like her dinner?

MATA HARI

Non Soeur ...

YOUNG NUN

I am not your sister ...

MATA HARI

You are a nun ... are you not?

YOUNG NUN

Yes I am ...

MATA HARI

And I am a creature of God?

YOUNG NUN

That I am not so sure.

MATA HARI

Soeur ... I am baptized ...I went to my first communion and  
have been a good girl ...

YOUNG NUN

A good girl ... that is not what I have heard. They plan to shoot  
you at dawn. They don't shoot good girls.

MATA HARI

I am innocent ... you must believe me Soeur.

YOUNG NUN

The French Army do not shoot the innocent ...

MATA HARI

In war the innocent suffer the most ... they are shot, bombed  
and gassed.

The young nun stares at her.

YOUNG NUN

And what is this nonsense about a warm bath ... it is midnight  
for heaven's sake.

MATA HARI

I would normally take my bath early in morning. Somehow I do  
not think they will let me keep them waiting.

The old nun picks up the food plate and does the sign of the cross. Mata  
Hari does the same.

MATA HARI

Soeur I will need someone to help me to get ready...my hands  
are shaking!

YOUNG NUN

I will ask to see whether they will let me wake one of the older orphan girls ...

MATA HARI

Thank you Soeur ....

The old nun shakes her fist at MATA HARI.

YOUNG NUN

But remember this ... the first sign of trouble and I will beat you silly.

MATA HARI

Yes Soeur ...

YOUNG NUN

I may be a nun but don't think I can't do it. I grew up with two older brothers. I am after all responsible for the orphans.

MATA HARI

Soeur you know ... I once had a son and a daughter ...

YOUNG NUN

Once?

MATA HARI

My children are both dead.

YOUNG NUN

The war?

MATA HARI

No .... They caught something and died long before the war ...  
first my son and then my daughter.

YOUNG NUN

And your husband?

MATA HARI

He is dead. He gave my children what he had caught in the far  
east?

The eyes of the young nun grows large ....

YOUNG NUN

How old was your daughter?

MATA HARI

Twelve ...

YOUNG NUN

And your son?

MATA HARI

Nine ...

YOUNG NUN

So young ...

The nun kneels she motions Mata Hari to join her. She kneels and joins her.

YOUNG NUN

Let us say our prayers for your children ...

The young nun says the Latin prayer for the dead.

MATA HARI

Amen

There is a knock at the door and the door opens. In walks the guard.

GUARD

What is going on?

MATA HARI

The sister and I have said a prayer for my dead children.

GUARD

Do not fret Madame ... you will soon be joining them ...

YOUNG NUN

Monsieur! ...

The nun stands and shakes her fist at the guard. Mata Hari slowly stands.

YOUNG NUN

Shame on you!

GUARD

Leave me alone. I don't like this any more than you do sister.

YOUNG NUN

Then hold your tongue!

Mata Hari puts her hands on her hips and addresses the guard.

MATA HARI

Well then ... will I join my children in Heaven?

GUARD

Either there or in the other place Madame? It will depend on whether you are innocent like you say you are.

The young nun walks over and stands in front of the guard.

YOUNG NUN

Enfant ... you have no heart?

GUARD

After three years in the army sister I have no heart left. I have seen all my friends die a miserable death in the trenches. The war has robbed me of any compassion I once had.

YOUNG NUN

You are no longer at the front. You are safe west of Paris.

GUARD

Safe for now sister... but it is only two hours by truck to the front. And les Boschés have not given up. Besides death will visit this place in a few hours and I will have to be part of his handy work. ... I am sorry Madame.

MATA HARI

I forgive you monsieur. I know you mean no harm.

YOUNG NUN

Tell the Colonel I am waking one of the orphan children to help Madame prepare.

MATA HARI

Thank you Soeur ...

YOUNG NUN

Il ne a pas de quoi. I shall return with someone to help you get ready.

## **THE MOUSE'S VISIT INT NIGHT**

The door is close. A mouse appears at the mouse hole. It looks into the cell for a moment. Mata Hari notices the mouse but does not react.

The mouse takes hold of the cheese and starts to nibble at it. Mata Hari talks to the mouse.

MATA HARI

Lucky you. I hope you enjoy the cheese.

The mouse stops eating the cheese and looks up at her.

MATA HARI

Do you visit many guests here in your prison?

The mouse preens itself and approaches Mata Hari carrying the cheese.

MATA HARI

You are the only one here who is free to move about. Even the guards are prisoners here.

The mouse approaches even closer. The mouse is looking up at Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

When I was very young I had a pet mouse just like you. Her name was Elsa.

MATA HARI

We were very poor and I had to hide Elsa from my parents. Elsa would come and visit me after dark and I would feed it food I brought up from the kitchen by candlelight.

There is a sound at the door. The mouse looks towards the door, grabs the cheese and runs back into her mouse hole.

MATA HARI

Don't worry my little friend ... they aren't coming for you.

## **LAWYER'S SECOND VISIT INT NIGHT**

The mouse disappears into the mouse hole just as the guard knocks and the door swings opens. It is the lawyer returning.

LAWYER

I have spoken with the Colonel.

MATA HARI

And ...

LAWYER

He will provide you with a bath

MATA HARI

That's grand. The sister must have talked with him.

LAWYER

She did and the Colonel has also agreed to let you have your trunk but it will be searched first.

MATA HARI

That's fine ... as long as I have my things after my bath. And what about my last supper?

LAWYER

He does not think he can provide you with the grand supper you have asked for.

Mata Hari stands in a very agitated mood ... she waves her hand regally through the air.

MATA HARI

The Hell with the Colonel then ... telephone Phillip the head chef at l'Hotel Athenes and ask him to prepare and bring my last supper to me.

LAWYER

The Colonel won't be too happy if I do this,

MATA HARI

Don't tell him then. Forgiveness is easier to get than permission.

LAWYER

He will be angry.

MATA HARI

He must let me have my last supper. After this morning it will be your problem. Besides Philip owes me.

LAWYER

What do I say to Phillip then?

MATA HARI

When you telephone him just tell him what I want and if he says no ... then mention to him that I know about his collection prive of photographs.

LAWYER

Photographs?

MATA HARI

It is quite a collection. My photograph are just modest compared to the really naughty ones.

LAWYER

I don't know if blackmail is a good idea.

MATA HARI

Phillip has a friend who runs a small photo shop in Montmatre. All the models and their friends have gone there to get their pictures taken. Even Picasso. I have gone there a few times myself.

LAWYER

And so?

MATA HARI

His friend told me about Phillip's collection. He has some photographs he should not have and would compromise important society people.

LAWYER

Oh ... I see ... I will talk with Phillip.

MATA HARI

Ask him to deliver my last supper in person and to bring a nice bottle of wine.

LAWYER

What about the guard? How will get Phillip and your meal past him?

MATA HARI

Maybe ask Phillip to bring another bottle of fine wine for the guard along with something for him to eat. I suspect the guard hasn't had a good meal in at least three years.

LAWYER

I will try my best.

MATA HARI

And ask Phillip to be here no later than 3:00. I will want to enjoy my last meal and not be rushed.

The lawyer walks over to the door and knocks. The guard opens the door and the lawyer nods at Mata Hari and exits without saying anything.

## **BATHING INT NIGHT**

A standing bath is brought in and placed in the centre of the room. It is shaped in a half oyster shell. Several brass buckets of hot water are brought in as well. A young woman comes in, introduces herself and proceeds to help Mata Hari get ready for her bath.

Mata Hari stands with her back to the audience behind a screen. You see her head and neck at the top of the screen and her feet and the bath at the bottom of the screen.

The young woman lifts and pours one of the buckets of hot water on her and then takes a cloth, wets it, rubs in some soap and then begins to wash Mata Hari.

Mata Hari is in a bath having her back scrubbed. The young woman scrubbing her back is sombre and serious. The young woman is nervous and drops the soap.

**YOUNG WOMAN**

I am sorry Madame.

**MATA HARI**

Why are you so nervous?

YOUNG WOMAN

My job every evening is to wash the younger children before they are put to bed.

MATA HARI

All the children ... both the girls and the boys?

YOUNG WOMAN

Only the younger ones ... the girls love bath time. The boys hate it.

She drops the soap a second time.

YOUNG WOMAN

It's the middle of the night. I am very sleepy ...

MATA HARI

Is that all?

WOMAN

Well ... you are very pretty Madame. I have never done this before.

MATA HARI

Do not be shy ... we woman have nothing to hide from each other.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't let anyone bath me. I bath by myself ...

MATA HARI

I have let men pay to do this ...

YOUNG WOMAN

You would!

MATA HARI

and to watch too. some of the great artists like would draw as woman took their bath.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame ...

MATA HARI

There is a wonderful painting ... le dejeuner sur l'herbe. ... two men at a picnic with two woman. One is bathing in a pond and the other is sitting nude with the two men talking.

YOUNG WOMAN

Sorry Madame ... but I still don't believe you.

MATA HARI

The painting sits on the wall in a museum in Paris. At least it did before the war began ... before the Germans began to bombard Paris with their shells.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why would anyone paint such a scene?

MATA HARI

You know ... you think it's a picnic ... but there isn't a wine bottle in the painting. They are there for another reason ...

YOUNG WOMAN

And what would that be?

MATA HARI

I will let you figure that out ...

Mata Hari draws her hand down the side of her figure following the curve without touching her skin. The young woman blushes and draws her hand to her mouth.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame!

MATA HARI

My dear ... do you know why god created woman after man?

The young woman shakes her head. Mata Hari turns to face the audience and in a pose reminiscent of The Birth of Venus continues. She wraps a towel around herself and starts to dry herself

MATA HARI

God created woman after man because she learned from her mistakes She won an award for the creation of woman.

YOUNG WOMAN

That's not what the nuns teach us here.

MATA HARI

What do they teach you?

YOUNG WOMAN

They teach us about Adam and Eve and original sin.

MATA HARI

What would the nuns know about sin? Are they not suppose to be chaste?

YOUNG WOMAN

They teach us that we are all born with original sin.

MATA HARI

A child is a gift from god. If we are born with original sin then he has made a mistake.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame ... I don't understand. A moment ago you said that God was a woman.

MATA HARI

I would like to think that God is female. Woman bring life into the world. Looking at this terrible war and all its death and suffering ... how can God be a man?

YOUNG WOMAN

Huh ... Madame let me dry your hair.

Mata Hari goes to her trunk and removes a robe. She removes the towel around her and wraps herself in a purple robe and puts slippers on her feet. Then she sits on the edge of the cot and the young woman dries her hair with a towel. Mata Hari closes her eyes and begins to rock slowly. Neither of them are talking. The lights dim somewhat to give the moment a sleepy air.

MATA HARI

Well my dear ... thank you for helping me with my bath. It is late I would normally sleep in on a cold October day like today.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't think they will let you do that today.

MATA HARI

Of all days ... when I need my beauty sleep.

The young woman begins to cry.

MATA HARI

Now now ... my dear. Do not cry. Soon I will have plenty of time to sleep ... besides I have had a very good life.

MATA HARI

We have been talking for so long but I have yet to ask ... what is your name dear?

The young woman stops crying, then composes herself before she curtsies.

YOUNG WOMAN

Marie-Eve ... Madame.

MATA HARI

That is a pretty name ... You are named after the first temptress of men.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame?

MATA HARI

Eve ... who offered man the forbidden fruit ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh ... you mean Adam and Eve ... from the Bible.

MATA HARI

Yes she offered him her pear and as a result was thrown out of paradise by the archangel Gabriel.

YOUNG WOMAN

You mean an apple?

MATA HARI

That's not how the story was told to me. She gave him her pear ... You know Marie – Eve ... the name of my first love was Gabriel. He threw me out of paradise when I was sixteen.

YOUNG WOMAN

Threw you out of Paradise?

MATA HARI

We were in school together. He was a grade older than me. We went for a long walk one day in the summer of 1880 and well ...I met the serpent for the first time.

YOUNG WOMAN

You met the serpent Madame?

MATA HARI

Child ... do you not know anything about life ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Life ... only what I learned on the farm Madame,, watching the calves being birthed by their mothers..

MATA HARI

So you know where the birds and the bees come from then?

YOUNG WOMAN

They come from God ... don't they Madame.

MATA HARI

You are so sweet and innocent ... How old are you?

YOUNG WOMAN

I will be seventeen in December.

MATA HARI

And how many lovers have you had?

YOUNG WOMAN

Lovers?

The young woman lowers her head and blushes.

MATA HARI

Don't tell me that you are an un-blossomed flower!

YOUNG WOMAN

Un-blossomed?

MATA HARI

You have never been with a man have you?

The young woman shakes her head.

MATA HARI

Have you not even thought about what a man looks like?

YOUNG WOMAN

I saw my father once when he was stepping out of the bath. It all seemed a little funny to me.

MATA HARI

How old were you?

YOUNG WOMAN

Nine ... My father found out, got angry and spanked me.

MATA HARI

When it comes to natural curiosity ... there's nothing wrong with that.... Its called being a voyeur my dear.

YOUNG WOMAN

Voyeur ... you mean to watch ...

MATA HARI

And you have not even thought about this since?

YOUNG WOMAN

No Madame.

MATA HARI

Men are natural voyeurs ... we women less so.

MATA HARI

Along with watching me bathe ...you know Marie-Eve I had men pay me to watch me undress while I danced ... That's what made me so famous.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame! Were you not ashamed?

MATA HARI

Ashamed ... but why my dear?

YOUNG WOMAN

To be ... sans habitment.

MATA HARI

I have never been ashamed about how I look.

Mata Hari looks her up and down.

MATA HARI

Nor should you!

Almost in a whisper the Marie-Eve asks.

YOUNG WOMAN

Did they pay you very much?

MATA HARI

To begin with not very much ... but later well I became one of the wealthiest woman in Europe. But when you start from poverty there is only one way to go ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Up ...

MATA HARI

Yes dear ... from poverty up to wealth and security.

At this point Mata Hari looks down and notices that Marie-Eve has bare feet.

MATA HARI

My dear where are your shoes?

YOUNG WOMAN

Outside Madame. They were covered in mud.

MATA HARI

Your feet must be very cold. Here show me your foot.

The woman offers her a foot. Mata Hari sees that her feet are red and cold.

MATA HARI

Go look in my trunk ... There are some gray shoes with laces ...

YOUNG WOMAN

If I do this I will get into trouble.

MATA HARI

If they fit you ... you can have them.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really ... Madame!

MATA HARI

It is not like I will need them again. Oh and you might want to put on a pair of socks.

The young woman's eyes grow large and excited. She rushes over to the trunk and opens the lid and looks in. Mata Hari is standing next to the bath drying herself.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look at all these clothes!

MATA HARI

Leave the clothes for now... Have you found the shoes?

YOUNG WOMAN

Oui madame.

MATA HARI

Come here and I will wash your feet ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Wash my feet?

MATA HARI

Here ... sort of like what they do at church during lent. Put your feet in the tub.

The young woman walks over to the tub and then puts a foot in. Mata Hari washes that foot, then the girl puts the other foot in and Mata Hari washes that foot as well,

MATA HARI

Now dry then well. I don't want you to catch your death of a cold.

The young woman slowly and carefully dries her feet.

MATA HARI

I think the pink stockings would look nice on you.

The young woman stands and walks over to the trunk. She searches for and takes a pair of pink silk stockings from the trunk. They are wrapped in paper and have never been used.

YOUNG WOMAN

The stockings are so soft and beautiful.

MATA HARI

Only something pink and soft should be next to your skin ...  
don't you think? Come stand here and let me put them on for  
you.

The young woman stands while and Mata Hari put the stockings on her, with  
two garters, then the shoes ... she takes her time to lace the shoes.

YOUNG WOMAN

I have never had anything so soft next to my skin.

MATA HARI

Luscious isn't it. Your dress looks so rough and drab.

YOUNG WOMAN

It is the only one I have got.

MATA HARI

What ... Let me find you a better dress.

## YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame ... I do not think the nuns will let me keep a pretty dress and such fine shoes.

## MATA HARI

Why should they care? I am free to give away my things to whomever I want. They are after all my things.

## YOUNG WOMAN

If you give me anything they will take it away and sell it. They need to find food for the young orphans who are here. I am one of the older ones.

## MATA HARI

Where are your parents?

## YOUNG WOMAN

My father died two summers ago. He was gassed at the front and died several weeks later in the hospital of pneumonia. My mother died that December ... I think she died of a broken heart.

MATA HARI

How long have you been here?

YOUNG WOMAN

Not long. Just a few months. There are some children that have been here since before the war. These little ones have terrible nightmares. I sometimes stay up all night, hold them and rock them asleep.

MATA HARI

I think I understand why the sister chose you to come help me.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why?

MATA HARI

You will not have nightmares.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why do you say this?

## MATA HARI

They shoot me at dawn!

Before the young woman could react the door opens and two soldiers enter to collect the bath and buckets.

Mata Hari is still in her robes. She starts to hum an exotic tune and dance around the room. The guards stop what they are doing and watch.

Marie – Eve watches both Mata Hari and the men. They can't take their eyes off of her.

As they work she flirts and teases the guards they nearly spill one of the buckets.

## YOUNG SOLDIER

She's crazy!

## OLD SOLDIER

Now you can tell your grand children you watched the great Mata Hari dance. Let's get out of here before the Colonel catches us and sends us back to the front.

Mata Hari laughs a hysterical laugh. The soldier leave in an awkward hurry ... then she notices the woman is crying.

MATA HARI

There ... there my dear be brave. We must all die sometime! I am just another casualty of war, just like you ...

Marie – Eve continues to weep but not as fiercely. Mata Hari walks over to her and stops to admire her face. She wipes away the tears with the corner of her robe and then walks over to the trunk reaches into the trunk and lifts out a dress and presses it against the young woman.

MATA HARI

Look at that. You are about my size! Try the dress on.

The young woman looks a moment and admires the fineness of the dress then draws her old threadbare dress off. Mata Hari helps her into the new dress then laces it up for her. She turns the young woman around to see how the dress fits.

MATA HARI

It fits you very well. You will fill out more still.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you. You are very kind and generous Madame ...

MATA HARI

You are very welcome my dear.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why did you dance when the soldiers were here? .

MATA HARI

I danced because I wanted to my dear. I am still free to dance, even if they have locked me here and intend to end my life at dawn. Dawn hasn't arrived yet.

Mata Hari stands and begins to dance with the young woman, who is awkward at first but quickly picks it up.

MATA HARI

You dance well. Can I tell you a secret?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes ...

## MATA HARI

You notice how attentive the soldiers were of me while I danced?

The young woman nods.

## MATA HARI

They call us the weaker sex ...but we woman have great power over men. If we merely crossed out legs for a month ... the war in Europe would end in two.

The young woman laughs. Mata Hari joins her and they hug. There is noise and motion outside the barred windows. It is the changing of the guards. This brings the two of them back to reality.

## YOUNG WOMAN

Let me help you with your dress.

Quietly the two dress her in a plain grey dress with a matching hat. Just as they finished there is a knock at the door and the door swings open. The same two soldiers bring in two large picnic baskets and sets them on the table.

## **DINNER ARRIVES INT NIGHT**

In enters the Lawyer followed by a tall thin man. The young woman wants to leave but Mata Hari grabs her by the arm and guides her to the cot and motions for her to sit down and stay. Mata Hari turns back to her visitors.

MATA HARI

Phillip you came!

CHEF

Yes I did.

MATA HARI

I am glad. What did you bring me?

She rushes over to the table and opens the two baskets and starts to poke around looking at its contents.

CHEF

What ... no kiss for George and me?

MATA HARI

Of course ... of course ... how rude of me.

She rushes over and hugs and kisses Philip. Then she turns to George.

CHEF

That's much better. When George came and asked me I dropped everything. Just like old times heh miss.

MATA HARI

Thanks Philip. I didn't want to meet my end on an empty stomach.

She turns to the Lawyer.

MATA HARI

Any news?

The Lawyer shakes his head and says nothing. Mata Hari turns back to the table and stops.

CHEF

Let me lay out the table.

He starts to take things out of the basket and place it on the table, starting with a table cloth and a bottle with a candle which he lights.

Philip takes a bottle of champagne out and hands it to George who proceeds to open it. The cork pops. George fills a glass and hands it to Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

Merci George. Let us party like there is no tomorrow.

LAWYER

How fitting. Knowing you and your parties ... let us not drink too much shall we. We must both keep our wits.

The lawyer turns to the young woman sitting on the cot.

LAWYER

Who is this?

MATA HARI

This is Marie-Eve. She has been helping me get ready. Doesn't she look pretty?

LAWYER

How do you do miss. Do you live here in the orphanage?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes sir. I do.

LAWYER

Not one for many words are you little one.

YOUNG WOMAN

Sir, I have been told never to talk with strangers.

MATA HARI

I am a stranger and you talk to me.

The young woman points at the lawyer.

YOUNG WOMAN

You are a lady, Madame. He is a stranger.

MATA HARI

George, I think she means you are a man and therefore not to be trusted.

The lawyer is annoyed.

LAWYER

I am a solicitor Miss.

MATA HARI

You solicit do you .... George I think she has a point, don't you.

LAWYER

If you can't trust a lawyer ... who can you trust.

MATA HARI

George ... I think you should stop while you are still ahead ... barely ahead.

The young woman giggles.

CHEF

The table is set and the dinner is ready miss.

George moves the stool to the table so that Mata Hari can sit. She motions to Marie-Eve to join her.

MATA HARI

Here sit on my lap Marie-Eve and have some dinner.

The young woman walks over to the table. She had never before seen such opulence and admires the setting. The chef offers her a piece of pate on a cracker. While she is distracted Mata Hari gently pulls her down onto her lap.

MATA HARI

Were my daughter still alive she would be about your age.

YOUNG WOMAN

What happened to your daughter?

MATA HARI

She died when she was nine.

YOUNG WOMAN

Did she die in the war?

MATA HARI

No she died before the war, when we lived in the Far East. She died of consumption and pneumonia.

YOUNG WOMAN

That's very sad Madame. You must miss her very much.

MATA HARI

I miss both my son and my daughter.

YOUNG WOMAN

You had a family?

MATA HARI

Not any more. George here is all I have ... and you Philip. You have always been kind to me too.

George reaches down and kisses Mata Hari's hand. Then he takes up Marie-Eve's hand and kisses it as well. The young woman quickly takes away her hand.

CHEF

It is nice of you to say this miss. It has always been a pleasure to serve you.

MATA HARI

Join me in a toast.

The chef produces two other glasses and fills them full of champagne.

LAWYER

What is there to toast at such a solemn moment?

Mata Hari looks around at her grim surroundings and then fixates on Marie-Eve.

MATA HARI

There is Marie-Eve. Let us toast her beauty and youth.

Marie-Eve drops her head and blushes.

CHEF

To her beauty!

LAWYER

To her youth.

Mata Hari offers Marie-Eve her glass.

MATA HARI

Here dear have a sip.

Marie-Eve reluctantly eyes the glass before she sips a little bit of champagne.

MATA HARI

Well?

YOUNG WOMAN

I have never had champagne before.

MATA HARI

Never! There are so many things you have never done before ...  
is there.

YOUNG WOMAN

It tastes good and tickles the nose.

CHEF

Have some more. It goes well with the pate fois gras.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't know if I should. I might drink too much.

LAWYER

Don't worry Marie – Eve we will look after you.

MATA HARI

That's right dear ... he can look after you ...

There is a slight edge to her voice. George gives her the eye. She  
teases him back without Marie-eve noticing. She is too busy hungrily  
tasting the different food.

CHEF

And for dessert I have brought a Pavlova.

YOUNG WOMAN

A Pavlova! Really .. a Pavlova!

CHEF

Yes ... have you never had a Pavlova?

YOUNG WOMAN

No I have never tasted one ... but I have heard of it!

George and Mata Hari look at each other in surprise.

MATA HARI

Well Philip ... better slice her a big piece.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame! Oh I love you.

She gives Mata Hari a big hug and then watches as the Chef cut her a piece.

She eyes the cake hungrily and he moves the knife over and cuts her a bigger piece.

He sets the plate before her and she eats it rapidly to begin with and then remembers her manners and slows and begins to eat the cake daintily.

George places his hand on her shoulder. She stops and looks up at him.

GEORGE

Don't worry my little one ... there is another piece waiting for you.

# THE SPIRIT BOARD INT NIGHT

MATA HARI turns to the Chef.

MATA HARI

Did you bring it?

CHEF

Oui Madame.

GEORGE

Margaretha ... No ...

MATA HARI

Yes ... George

GEORGE

... you don't Really believe in that nonsense do you?

MATA HARI

What if I do?

The Chef pulls a object wrapped in pink paper and a lovely bow from the basket.

GEORGE

Philip ... how could you?

CHEF

In her note ... Madame was adamant!

MATA HARI

Here George ... have some more champagne ... it will calm your nerves

She pours him a glass and spills champagne all over him.

MATA HARI

Oh George ... I am so sorry. How clumsy of me.

GEORGE

Look what you have done. I will have to go and change.

MATA HARI

You brought a change of clothes.

GEORGE

Yes Mata Hari ... you can't wear evening clothes in the morning  
... it is just not done.

MATA HARI

George! Somehow I don't think they will care what you are wearing ...

GEORGE

Oh ... Margharite ... Mon Dieu ... I am sorry.

MATA HARI

They will be looking at me.

GEORGE

Many pardons ....

George realizes he has hurt her feelings but decides not to say  
anything more.

## MATA HARI

By all means George ... go ... and change.

She waves her hands and dismisses him. He bows solemnly to Mata Hari and just as he is about to turn and leave notices the young woman and bows to take his leave from her as well.

The Chef unwraps and lays the object on the table. It is a Ouija or spirit board. The young woman takes an interest and moves her fingers across the object

## YOUNG WOMAN

What is it Madame?

## MATA HARI

In Sumatra it's known as a semangat papan.

The young woman looks puzzled.

## MATA HARI

It's a spirit board.

CHEF

You use it to talk to spirits ... mademoiselle ... those who live  
beyond the grave.

The young woman draws her hand to her mouth and is frightened.

MATA HARI

I use the spirit board to talk to my son and daughter.

MATA HARI

Don't worry my dear ... the spirits will only come to you if you  
summon them.

The chef sits before the Ouija board, cups his hand in a circle and  
closes his eyes. He begins to move his hands around the board. The  
Young Girl is fascinated!

MATA HARI

Read the letters.

Mata Hari points to the board ...

YOUNG WOMAN

M ... A ... M ... A ... MAMA!

The young woman screams she is terrified. The Chef jumps at her scream. His concentration is broken. He stops

MATA HARI

Marie-Eve ... my dear girl ... don't be scared!

YOUNG WOMAN

But ... I am ...

MATA HARI

Try to be brave ...

YOUNG WOMAN

I will try ...

MATA HARI

Philip ... Shall we continue?

## CHEF

Oui Madame ... let us ...

He once again closes his eyes and cups his hands and they begin to move across the board.

## YOUNG WOMAN

W ... H ... E ... R ... E ... A ... R ... E ... Y ... O...U ... Where are you?

Mata Hari looks up as she speaks.

## MATA HARI

Here my dears ...

Mata Hari sobs ...

## MATA HARI

Soon I will be joining you ... very soon ...

The young woman takes here eyes off the board for a minute and toches Mata Hari's hand.

YOUNG WOMAN

W... E ... M ....I ... S ... S ... Y... O ...U ... M ... A ... M ...  
A .... We miss you Mama!

MATA HARI

I miss you both too ... very much.

There is a soft girl's voice in the background ...

YOUNG WOMAN

Wear something nice ... Mama ...

The Chef stops and opens his eyes. He stares at the young woman.  
The young woman is petrified. She spoke but in another person's  
voice.

MATA HARI

That was my daughter's voice!

YOUNG WOMAN

That was not me speaking Madame!

CHEF

We know. That was her daughter. You were channelling for her.

MATA HARI

This has never happened before with my children. They must be close.

CHEF

Yes Mata Hari ... they must be very close.

The Chef closes his eyes and continues.

MATA HARI

W ... E ... W ... I ... L ... L ... B ... E ... T ... H ... E ... R ... E ..

YOUNG WOMAN

We will be there.

MATA HARI

Y ... O ... U ... A ... R ... E ... N ... O ... T ... A ... L ... O  
... N ... E ...

## YOUNG WOMAN

You are not alone.

Mata Hari buries her head in her hands and starts to cry. The Chef stops.

## THE WISH INT NIGHT

The door opens and the Lawyer appears at the door. He is dressed in a sombre grey suit.

GEORGE

Now look what you've done!

Mata Hari looks up. Her mascara has smudged and she looks devastated.

The lawyer rushes across the room to console her.

GEORGE

My dear Margharite.

Mata Hari brushes him aside and starts to laugh hysterically. The Chef is wrapping the Spirit Board and putting it away. He also starts to pack the rest of the dinner back into the basket.

GEORGE

She's mad ... quite mad. I must get them to stop this. They cannot execute a mad woman, not even in wartime!

MATA HARI

Stop George ... I am not crazy ... I am happy.

GEORGE

Happy!

MATA HARI

My one great wish is to be fulfilled.

YOUNG WOMAN

What wish is that Madame?

MATA HARI

Soon I will see my son and daughter again.

The young woman gives Mata Hari a big hug. Mata Hari looks at the Lawyer and then at the young woman as she is being hugged.

MATA HARI

Marie-Eve ... can I ask you something?

YOUNG WOMAN

You may ask me anything you want Madame.

MATA HARI

If you had one wish what would it be?

YOUNG WOMAN

If I had one wish what would I wish?

LAWYER

Yes ... one wish and only one.

Marie-Eve gets up off of Mata Hari's lap and starts to dance around the room.

YOUNG WOMAN

I wish I could live in Paris ... the city of lights ... and to dance on the stage, and to drink champagne every night and have Pavlova for dessert every night.

LAWYER

That's too many wishes. Besides if you had Pavlova every night you would be plump in no time ...

MATA HARI

To live in Paris is an expectation ... George ... the others are the wishes. Don't you agree Philip?

CHEF

Yes Miss ... every one expects to one day live in Paris. Not everyone can hope to dance on the stage, drink champagne and get plump on Pavlova.

MATA HARI

And dine in your restaurant, n'est ce pas?

Mata Hari leans over to George

MATA HARI

George dearest ...

LAWYER

Yes Margeretha.

MATA HARI

Why don't you take her with you?

LAWYER

What!

MATA HARI

Take her back to Paris

The young woman stops dancing. Her eyes are as wide as saucers.  
She is short of breath and excited.

YOUNG WOMAN

Can you do that?

LAWYER

Well ...

The young woman walks over and pleadingly tugs on his lapel.

YOUNG WOMAN

Please ... will you do that sir?

MATA HARI

Can't you see she needs to leave? She is no longer a child. She has so much to see, so much to do ... so much to experience for the first time.

CHEF

Who wouldn't want to leave this grey and dismal place?

Mata Hari turns to Philip. Hoping to play both ends against the middle.

MATA HARI

Philip ... will you take her with you? She can work as a server in your restaurant.

CHEF

Yes .. I could ... but how do we get her out.

The young woman looks around and then rushes over to the trunk

YOUNG WOMAN

I can hide in your trunk Madame and they can carry me out of here.

She rushes over and gives Philip a hug. They look at each other in amusement.

LAWYER

Well Philip?

CHEF

I have done worst.

MATA HARI

I imagine you both have.

The two men carefully lift the young woman into the trunk. Mata Hari walks over and kisses her on the forehead.

MATA HARI

You will have to be very quiet and very still.

The young woman gives her an adoring hug.

MATA HARI

Merci Madame pour tout. You are a saint.

MATA HARI

And you are my angel. Live a long and happy life.

Mata Hari gives her a second kiss, this time on the lips.

MATA HARI

And remember me ...

The young woman disappears into the trunk and then suddenly reappears.

YOUNG WOMAN

The cake .. can I take the Pavlova with me?

The chef hands her the cake.

CHEF

I thought mademoiselle might ....

The young woman disappears a second time into the trunk the two men close and latch the trunk.

MATA HARI

Philip I know I can trust ... you George ... you be nice.

The Chef bangs on the door and the door swings open and the two guards appear.

OLD GUARD

It is time for you to pack up and leave.

CHEF

Time for me to go Miss.

MATA HARI

Thank you so much Philip. It was nice to see you one last time.

CHEF

I shall make a dish and name it in your honour. Only the finest will be allowed to partake in the Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

A dessert Philip?

CHEF

No miss ...

He starts to cry

CHEF

The main course ... something succulent and fresh ... uplifting and spicy at the same time.

The old guard starts to push the chef to the door with the butt of his rifle.

OLD GUARD

You must be off before the Colonel arrives. He doesn't know you are here.

## LAWYER

Philip ... tell my chauffeur to drive you and Mata Hari's trunk back to Paris and ask him to return this morning for me.

The chef nods at the Lawyer.

## CHEF

A Dieu ... to God .... Mata Hari ...

Mata Hari blows him a kiss. He reciprocates. The young guard uses his rifle to push the chef out of the room.

The old guard searches the room, stopping at the trunk. He inspects the latches ... there is a pink ribbon from the girl's dress that is streaming outside the trunk. He tugs at it. The ribbon disappears into the trunk ... as he looks at it.

## OLD GUARD

Where is the young woman that was here helping you?

## LAWYER

She seems to have vanished. She did not want to stay here any longer ...

The young guard returns. The old guard eyes the Lawyer and Mata Hari suspiciously but does nothing. He waves at the younger guard in exasperation.

OLD GUARD

We are to take away the trunk now.

LAWYER

It can go in the back of my car. My Chauffeur will look after the trunk.

The two soldiers pick up the trunk.

YOUNG GUARD

It's so much heavier ... don't you think.

OLD GUARD

Stop complaining ... you young people ... all you try to do is escape your responsibilities.

As the guard says this he looks at Mata Hari. She rushes over to him and kisses him on the cheek.

## OLD GUARD

I may be old ... Madame but I am not stupid. No one deserves this ...

The Old Guard looks around at the room. They trudge off with the trunk, leaving the Lawyer and Mata Hari alone. The door to the cell is left ajar.

## LAWYER

We can try to escape?

## MATA HARI

Save Marie-Eve ... I am beyond saving. Why did he let Marie – Eve escape?

## LAWYER

The Colonel doesn't know about Philip and the food!

## MATA HARI

What! How did you arrange it then?

LAWYER

Philip bribed the old guard ... paid him off ...

MATA HARI

Really ... for a Chef he's clever ... how much?

LAWYER

Its not about being clever. He knows how to keep his restaurant well provisioned even in wartime. How much ... 1,000 American dollars ...

MATA HARI

A thousand American dollars ... I would have to dance six months to get that ... how did Philip manage that?

LAWYER

The American officers are coming to his restaurant each night in numbers, flush with cash and Philip insists they pay him in American dollars.

MATA HARI

Maybe the Americans will be France's saviours after all ... and maybe I should have gone into business with Philip ... instead of taking up dancing.

LAWYER

Me ... I might give up my day job!

MATA HARI

Promise me the two of you will look after Marie – Eve. Or I will come back to haunt you in your nightmares.

She wags her finger sternly at the Lawyer. George nods solemnly.

## **ABSOLUTION INT NIGHT**

Dawn is breaking. In the background is heard a rooster crowing.

There is the sound of marching soldiers. A line of cars can be heard approaching.

The door to the cell opens and in enters an old French Priest carrying a rosary and a black bible. He makes the sign of the cross.

**PRIEST**

I have been sent to comfort you. Dawn is upon us.

**MATA HARI**

Not you too ...

**PRIEST**

What my child?

**LAWYER**

Margaretha behave yourself.

MATA HARI

Why ... George?

LAWYER

All that is left is precious minutes ... and what they will remember you by.

MATA HARI

I want to be remembered for who I really am ... and not what they say I am.

PRIEST

I have come to hear your confession, nothing more.

MATA HARI

I have nothing to confess.

PRIEST

Surely you have sinned.

MATA HARI

I am innocent.

PRIEST

The condemned always say they are innocent.

LAWYER

If she is guilty of anything it is having trusted the officers of la  
Republique and everything they represent.

PRIEST

Confess your sins ... my child.

MATA HARI

I am not of your loins ... don't call me child.

PRIEST

We are all children of God.

MATA HARI

I am without blame.

PRIEST

Everyone is born with original sin.

MATA HARI

Even you father?

PRIEST

Yes, even me.

MATA HARI

Even the officers of the court martial

PRIEST

Yes ...

LAWYER

Father, the next time they come to confess their sins ... tell them they have added calculated and cold-blooded murder to all their other sins. Mata Hari is innocent.

PRIEST

Only God knows that for certain ...

MATA HARI

In a few minutes ... father I will ask him myself.

PRIEST

You have lived a life in iniquity Margaretha.

MATA HARI

I have been myself ... and done what I have needed to do.

PRIEST

You have been a temptress of men ... I am told.

MATA HARI

Was it wrong to bare my body?

PRIEST

It was.

MATA HARI

Why ... Am I not made in God's image?

PRIEST

That is what the scriptures say.

She unbuttons the front of her blouse and bares her bodice to the Priest. The Priest makes the sign of the cross.

MATA HARI

In a few short minutes God's perfection will be torn apart by you men.

Mata Hari starts to cry uncontrollably. The Lawyer rushed to cover and console her.

The priest turns his back and starts to read his bible.

It takes a few minutes for Mata Hari to regain her composure. She buttons herself up and sets things right.

PRIEST

If you will not confess your sins ... then let me at least bless you  
Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Why ... Why should I let you bless me?

PRIEST

So that you can be buried on sacred grounds. I will make sure  
of that.

Mata Hari slowly kneels and the Priest prays over her in Latin. He recites  
the last rights.

When he is finished he places the rosary around her neck and places his  
hand on her head.

PRIEST

Pax Vobiscum ... my child.

The Priest turns and leaves the cell.

## EXIT INT DAWN

A moment after the Priest leaves the door swings open one final time and in marches a French Colonel followed by two young guards. The two guards remain just outside the door and peer curiously in.

COLONEL

It is time.

The Lawyer steps forth and stands between Mata Hari and the Colonel.

LAWYER

Colonel I plead to you to postpone this travesty of justice.

COLONEL

I cannot do this sir.

LAWYER

You are putting an innocent woman to death

COLONEL

I have the proper warrants and orders for her execution here in my pocket.

LAWYER

You are following a wrongful order Colonel.

COLONEL

The order is signed and sealed by the President of France himself.

MATA HARI

.... The old goat ...

COLONEL

Pardon?

George rushes agitatedly towards the Colonel.

LAWYER

Yes ... give her a pardon!

COLONEL

What are you talking about man! Stand out of the way or I shall shoot you

In response, the Colonel steps back, draws his pistol, cocks it and points it at George.

MATA HARI

Better do as he says George ...

LAWYER

But Margaretha ...

MATA HARI

I don't want your blood on my hands. Put that away Colonel ... that will be unnecessary. There are enough bullets waiting outside.

George stands paralysed.

The Colonel slowly puts away his pistol and walks around the Lawyer and approaches Mata Hari..

Mata Hari walks over to the cot, picks up her hat and puts it on. She turns to the Colonel.

MATA HARI

I am ready ...

COLONEL

We must go ... Madame ... they are waiting.

The Colonel directs her to the door with his hand. She walks slowly over to George and kisses him on the cheek. He is crying ...

Mata Hari walks to the door, pauses at the door for a second and without turning back she says her last words to George

MATA HARI

I have always loved you George ... you know that ... Look after Marie – Eve ... She will be our redemption.

She straightens herself up and regally exits one guard before her one guard behind her. The Colonel follows behind them all.

George remains behind ... weeping uncontrollably.

## EXECUTION INT DAWN

In the background is heard some orders. There is scuffling outside the window and some latin scripture being read.

Then a few bars of the Marseilles is played. Then a clear voice.

COLONEL

Any last words Madame?

MATA HARI

I am Mata Hari ... Eye of the Dawn!

Ten footsteps are heard to trail off in the distance. A brief drum roll and then a volley of loud shot. The wall behind the cots lets loose with some dust.

George winces. Smoke drifts in through the window.

A moment later there is the single retort of a pistol. He winces a second time and slowly crumbles to the floor and cries in anguish

LAWYER

Mon Dieu ... my dear MATA HARI ... what have they done?

FADE TO BLACK